

Why do we pray? (1)

First Khutbah:

All perfect praise is due to Allaah; I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allaah and Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, upon whom may Allaah send salutations and exalt his mention, as well as that of his family and all his companions.

Slaves of Allaah! How often it is that we talk about our external enemies, but what about our internal enemy? What about ourselves? What about our responding to the call of Satan who whispers to mankind? What about our shortcomings regarding the rights of Allaah? What about us slighting our obligations and indulging in prohibitions? Are these not the main reasons for our defeat? Indeed they are.

When we respond to Allaah, adhere to His commandments and refrain from His prohibitions, our enemies will never be able to defeat or overtake us. The Jews and Christians only overpowered and subdued us Muslims when we neglected the commandments of Allaah. It is ironic that we ask why they were victorious and how they were able to gain complete control over us. It is often that we blame our enemies, making them the reason behind our defeat and humiliation, thereby freeing ourselves from any blame, when in fact it is us who are the ones to blame. It is due our shortcomings that our countries are occupied and humiliated, and one Muslim land after another falls into the hands of the Jews and the Christians.

Let us look at one example of something that we are neglecting and have shortcomings towards… let us address the issue of prayer - the most important practical pillar of Islaam.

Slaves of Allaah! There are many people amongst those who do actually pray who fail to realise the importance of prayer, its benefits and its true value; therefore, it has become a burden on them and not the delight of their eyes, tranquillity for their souls or a light for

their hearts. Many people pray hurriedly, without any calmness or tranquillity. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to one man: *"Go back and repeat your prayer because you have not performed your prayer (i.e., properly)."* *(Al-Bukhaari & Muslim)*. Despite the fact that this man had repeated his prayer a few times, the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* told him to repeat it again, until he had learnt how to pray with calmness and tranquillity.

Allaah mentions tranquillity and submissiveness as the foremost quality of the true believers when He says

الذين هم في صلاتهم خاشعون

Which means: *"They who are during their prayer humble and submissive."* *(Al-Mu'minoon: 2)*.

Allaah has commanded the establishment and preservation of prayer, which includes performing ablution properly, adhering to its timings, fulfilling its pillars and conditions, perfecting it by performing all its recommended acts and etiquettes, and trying ones best to prevent it from being rejected. One of the things which preserve and protect one's prayer is performing it in the mosque with the congregation. How many of us perform their prayers with the congregation? What about the *Fajr* prayer? If you want to know the condition of our Muslim nation, in terms of its weakness and strength, then simply monitor their attendance - not for the *'Eed* prayer or for public gatherings, but rather, monitor their attendance at the *Fajr* prayer.

There are many benefits which are gained from praying with the congregation, one of which is the harmony that is created among Muslims when they meet five times a day. Also, coming early to the prayer, which is a recommended act, has a great effect on a person and many great benefits; we will mention some of these benefits:

Waiting for the prayer until its due time earns one the same reward as praying itself. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Everyone among you will be deemed to be occupied in prayer (i.e. he will be gaining the same reward as if he is standing, bowing and prostrating) for as long as the prayer detains him (from worldly concerns), provided that nothing prevents him from returning to his family except the prayer."* *(Al-Bukhaari & Muslim)*.

Angels supplicate for such a person, as long as he does not nullify his ablution or harm anyone. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"The angels supplicate for any of you, so long as you remain in the place where you have performed prayer and are in a state of ablution. They (the angels) say: `O Allaah! Forgive him, O Allaah! Have mercy on*

.''' *(Al-Bukhaari)*. It is the angels who supplicate - angels who never tire or become burdened from worshipping Allaah.

Waiting for the next prayer after the current prayer has just ended eradicates sins, elevates one's ranks, and is considered as *Ribaat* (i.e., guarding the front rows of the Muslim army). Did you ever wish to be at the position of *Ribaat* in order to get its great reward? The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Should I not direct you to something by which Allaah obliterates sins and elevates (your) ranks.''* His companions replied: *"Yes, O Messenger of Allaah!"* He *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Performing ablution properly, even if in difficulty, frequently going to the mosque, and waiting eagerly for the next prayer after one prayer is over; indeed, that is Ribaat."(Muslim)*. So performing ablution with very cold or hot water, even though it may be difficult, is *Ribaat,* and waiting after the *Maghrib* prayer has just ended until the *'Ishaa'* prayer, which is a period of time that people usually waste, is also *Ribaat.*

Waiting for the next prayer after one has just ended guarantees that one will pray the next prayer in congregation, which will thereby earn one the reward which is twenty seven multiples of that for praying alone.

Going early to the mosque enables one to be present for the initial *'Allaahu Akbar'* of the prayer. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"He who is present at the time when the initial 'Allaahu Akbar' is uttered in the congregational prayer, for forty consecutive days, will receive two certificates (i.e., from Allaah); a (certificate of) clearance with which one is released from Hell, and a (certificate of) clearance which frees one from hypocrisy." (At-Tirmithi)*. So the question arises, when is one considered as having been present for this initial *'Allaahu Akbar'*? The answer is that one is considered as being present for this if he is standing in line for prayer and utters *'Allaahu Akbar'* immediately after the *Imaam* does.

It is a means of praying in the first row. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Were people to know the blessing of pronouncing the Athhaan and the standing in the first row, they would even (go as far as to) draw lots to secure these privileges.'' (Al-Bukhaari & Muslim).* The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* also said: *"The best of the men's rows (in prayer) is the first row and the worst is the last'' (Muslim)* and also: *"Allaah and His angels invoke blessings upon those who are in the first front rows.'' (An-Nasaa'i).*

Being on the right side of the front row is another benefit of going early. The

phet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Allaah and His angels invoke blessings upon those who are on the right side of the rows.''* *(Abu Daawood)*.

Another benefit is that it enables one to coincide with the *Imaam* when he utters *'Aameen'* in the loud prayers, which has a great virtue, because the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Say 'Aameen' when the Imaam says it, and if the 'Aameen' of any of you coincides with that of the angels, then all his past sins will be forgiven."* *(Al-Bukhaari & Muslim)*.

One should start saying it as soon as the *Imaam* begins to do so, and this will make it more likely to coincide with the angels saying it. What effort does one exert to get this great reward? It is a very simple thing to do, but what is the gain? The gain is that all of one's past sins will be forgiven; just take a look at the generosity of our Lord; The All-Giving, the Bestower of favours, who grants huge rewards for short, simple and minor acts.

One who goes early to the mosque is able to perform the optional prayers such as the one between the *Athaan* and the *Iqaamah*, and he is also able to supplicate between them. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"There is a prayer between every Athaan and Iqaamah.''* *(Al-Bukhaari & Muslim)*.

Going early to the mosque is a sign of being attached to it, which has a great reward. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Seven are (the categories of people) whom Allaah will give the shade of His throne to, on the Day when there will be no shade other than that of his throne: a man whose heart is attached to the mosques …"* *(Al-Bukhaari & Muslim)*. Such a slave will be protected under the shade of Allaah's throne when the sun will be commanded to descend very close to people's heads, and they will suffer greatly from the heat and begin sweating … it will be an extremely crowded area … each person will only have enough space for his two feet to stand on … It is during this time that Allaah will give the cool shade of His throne - to those whose hearts were attached to the mosque.

Arriving at the mosque early enables a person to pray attentively with calmness and tranquillity, which is the core of the prayer and its essence. Such a person would walk to the mosque according to the description of the *Sunnah*, because the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"When the Iqaamah is pronounced, do not come to it running, you should walk calmly and with tranquillity towards the congregation."* *(Al-Bukhaari &*

slim). **One French writer said:** ***"The five daily prayers are a clear sign that this religion purifies the heart and brings tranquillity to it in a way which affects both the worshipper and the one observing him."*** **Praying with tranquillity has caused many people throughout history to embrace Islaam, like the Jew *Sa'eed ibn Al-Hasan,* who became a Muslim 1838 CE. Also, it must be known that the Jews envy us for our saying *'Aameen'* and lining up for prayer; indeed our gathering for prayer greatly disturbs them.**

Prayer prevents a person from immorality and sin; it helps the Muslim during times of adversity by releasing his anguish and thereby enables him to persevere. Allaah says

واستعينوا بالصبر والصلاة وإنها لكبيرة إلا على الخاشعين الذين يظنون أنهم ملاقوا ربهم وأنهم إليه راجعون

Which means: ***"And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allaah]. Who are certain that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him."*** ***(Al-Baqarah: 45-46)*.** **When the news of the death of the brother of *ibn 'Abbaas,* may Allaah be pleased with him, reached him whilst he was travelling, he said: *"To Allaah we belong and to Him we shall return"* then he stepped down from his animal and prayed two long *Rak'ah,* then he started walking back to his animal whilst reciting the saying of Allaah**

واستعينوا بالصبر والصلاة و إنها لكبيرة إلا على الخاشعين

Which means: ***"And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allaah]."*** **Whenever he was afflicted with an adversity he used to pray two *Rak'ah* then say: *"O Allaah! We have done what You commanded us, so fulfil for us what You have promised us."***

Thomas Hayes, **who is a western doctor, said:** ***"As a doctor, I can say that the Muslim prayer is one of the most important ways through which humans have come to know what assures tranquillity of the soul and calmness of the nervous system."***

Alex Carrel, **who was a doctor who won the Nobel Prize for medicine said regarding the Muslim prayer:** ***"It generates energy in an amazing way throughout the human body. In fact it is the greatest energy generator that man knows of today. I have seen how prayers have cured many patients with whom all types of medicine have failed."***

A German man would place his forehead on the ground whenever he felt disturbed about anything, without knowing anything about Islaam, until one day he saw some Muslims praying and placing their foreheads on the ground during their prayer. So

asked them about these actions they were performing and they informed him that this was the way of prayer in Islaam, and thus he became a Muslim.

Slaves of Allaah! Indeed, this issue is worth our attention.

Second Khutbah

All perfect praise is due to Allaah; I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allaah and Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, upon whom may Allaah send salutations and exalt his mention, as well as that of his family and all his Companions.

O Muslim! O slave of Allaah! Return to performing your prayers regularly if you have shortcomings, or if you have neglected them; or if you used to pray them intermittently and have shunned the houses of Allaah; or if you used to delay them and pray them after their designated times, because the one who delays them will face a severe punishment. Allaah says

قالوا ما سلككم في سقر قالوا لم نكن من المصلين

Which means: ***"[And they (i.e., those who neglected their prayers) will be questioned on the Day of Judgment]: 'What put you into Saqar (i.e., Hell)?' They will say: 'We were not of those who prayed.'"(Al-Muddaththir: 42-43).***

Slaves of Allaah! Some people don't pray the five daily prayers; some pray *Fajr* after sunrise; some pray all their five prayers collectively, at the end of the day; some pray *'Asr* after sunset; and some people only pray the *Jumu'ah* prayer.

A woman once sent me a question that said: *"What is the ruling of my staying with my husband, who only prays the 'Eed prayer?"* This is why Allaah has forsaken us … this is how our Muslim Nation has lost its might – because the Muslim Nation has neglected its obligations. It has neglected its prayers by staying up late and is therefore squandering the *Fajr* prayer.

Slaves of Allaah! This is a serious issue, because prayer is the spinal cord of Islaam. I advise you if you have neglected your prayers to return to your Lord, because no one will bear your burdens on the Day of Resurrection except you … no wealth or children will benefit you … your youth, prestige and wealth will not remain eternally … you will regret

your shortcomings on the Day when regret will be of no benefit … and remember that death will come suddenly while you are heedless. Prayer is the first thing about which the slave will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection; if it was good then he will be successful, otherwise, he will be a loser.

Al-Haarith ibn Hassaan*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, got married and went the next day to pray *Fajr* with the congregation, so some of his friends asked him: *"Why did you come here now when you only got married last night?"* He replied: *"I swear by Allaah that only an evil woman would prevent me from attending the Fajr prayer with the congregation." (At-Tabaraani).

Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan As-Sulami*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to be carried whilst sick to pray in the mosque, and when he was suffering from his death sickness, he commanded his family to take him to the mosque and said: *"The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Everyone among you will be deemed to be occupied in prayer (i.e. he will be gaining the same reward as if he is standing, bowing and prostrating) for as long as the prayer detains him (from worldly concerns), provided that nothing prevents him from returning to his family except the prayer." (Al-Bukhaari & Muslim).

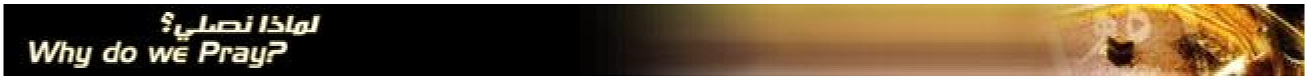
Whenever *'Abdullaah ibn Sa'd,* may Allaah be pleased with him, wanted to supplicate for a serious matter, he would pray the night prayer; and when he had become very old, he was praying the night prayer and started asking people around him (due to the fact that he was blind): *"Is it dawn yet?"* they replied: *"No."* So when it had become dawn, he said: *"I feel the coolness of dawn. O Allaah! Make the last deed I perform be today's Fajr prayer."* then he performed ablution and prayed the *Fajr* prayer; he uttered the first *Salaam* on the right, and as he was turning his face to the left side, he died.

Many of our pious *Salaf* died whilst prostrating, such as *Abu Tha'labah Al-Khushani*, *Salamah ibn Deenaar*, *ibn Al-Haaj Al-Maliki,* and others, may Allaah have mercy upon them all.

***'Aamir,* may Allaah be pleased with him, heard the *Athaan* as he was approaching his death, and said to his people: *"Take my hand and lead me to the mosque"* they replied: *"But you are extremely sick"* so he replied: *"How can I hear the Athaan and not respond?"* so he prayed the first *Rak'ah* of the *Maghrib* prayer and then died.**

Slaves of Allaah! This is a serious issue and its status is a reflection of the condition of the

Muslims; our strength lies in performing it and adhering to it, so if we wish to know our current condition, all we have to do is monitor our performance of prayer within the congregation.





Why do we pray? (2)

First Khutbah:

All perfect praise is due to Allaah; I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allaah and Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, upon whom may Allaah send salutations and exalt his mention, as well as that of his family and all his Companions.

Prayer is the delight of the eyes of those who love Allaah; it brings sweetness to the hearts and souls of dedicated worshippers; it is the fruit of submissiveness, the test of truthfulness and the scale on which people's status is measured; indeed it is one of the greatest bounties that Allaah has bestowed upon people and guided them to. Prayer raises people to a very high rank.

The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Allaah the Exalted has said: '… The most beloved thing with which My slave comes nearer to Me is that which I have enjoined upon him.'"*

- **Prayer is the spinal-cord of the religion. Allaah Has obligated upon every Muslim the five daily prayers and has given a great reward for performing them regularly. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Allaah has ordained upon his slaves five daily prayers; it is a pledge from Allaah that he who performs them and does not miss any of them due to negligence, He will admit him into Paradise; and he who does not perform them will have no pledge from Allaah; if He wills He will punish him or admits him to Paradise." (An-Nasaa'i).***

- **Prayer is a means for one to accompany the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* in Paradise. *Rabee`ah ibn Ka`b Al-Aslami,* may Allaah be pleased with him, who was a servant of the Messenger of Allaah and also one of the people of *As-Suffah,* said: *"I used to spend my nights in the company of the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and would carry water for his ablution. One day he said to me: "Ask***

something of me''* *So I said: 'I request your companionship in Paradise.' Then he asked:* ***"Is there anything else?'' *I replied: 'That is all.' So he said:* ***"Then help me in your request by increasing your prostrations.""*** ***(Muslim).***

· **Prayer raises one's rank and erases sins. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:** ***"Perform Prayer very frequently, for every prostration that you perform before Allaah will raise your rank by one degree and will remit one of your sins."*** ***(Muslim).*** **The frequent performance of prayer is a sign of humbleness with Allaah and an expression of servitude towards Him, during which the slave places the most honourable part of his body, which is his forehead, on the ground, as a sign of humility towards Allaah.**

· **Prayer rescues one from disbelief because what lies between a slave and disbelief is his abandoning of prayers.**

O Muslim! O Slave of Allaah! Why don't you pray? Do it as a means of pleasing your Lord and seeking admission into Paradise.

· **Prayer brings peace to the heart and mind. A woman from the Philippines said after she had become a Muslim:** ***"I never felt that my life had any value, and it had no taste to it. Nothing around me made any sense and seemed ridiculous. I grew up in a catholic family that was very strict in teaching me Christianity, and they always hoped that I would become a missionary; but something inside me always told me that their dream would never come true. I used to wake up at dawn daily, and something inside me would tell me to pray in order to be relieved from anxiety, and this would be repeated at sunset. What type of prayer is this (I used to ask myself)? I was thirsty for something different from what my people had offered. I used to pray and supplicate to Allaah to grant me the light of guidance. Then one day I felt a great desire in me which was forcing me to pray in a place without pictures in it, so I looked for a long time until I found such a place, it was a beautiful small mosque at the end of our town which lay between green rice fields. When I first set foot in it I was shaking, but as soon as I entered it I felt my heart relaxing and I realised that this was the place I was looking for and thinking about for such a long time. Inside this mosque I met a Muslim woman who taught me how to perform ablution and pray to the One and Only, the All-Powerful. I joined the Muslims in their prayers for the first time in my life, and as soon as we started the prayer I was overwhelmed with tranquillity and calmness; I was thrilled when I went down in prostration and felt I wanted to fly because I had found this prayer. It was just what I was looking and thirsting for. Prayer has become my intimate friend which has always kept me company. I greeted depression goodbye, because it had no place in my life any longer, as Allaah had guided me to Islaam and honoured me with His prayer; and had it not been for Allaah I would have never been guided."***

- **Prayer eradicates sins. Allaah says**

وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ طَرَفَىِ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَزُلَفاً مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ إِنَّ ٱلْحَسَنَـٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ ٱلسَّـيِّئَـٰتِ ذٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذكِرِينَ

Which means: ***"And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember." (Hood: 114).***

- **Prayer expiates sins as the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"The five (daily) prayers, and one Jumu`ah prayer to the (next) Jumu`ah prayer, and one Ramadhaan to the next, are expiations for the (sins) committed in between (them); provided that major sins are not committed." [Muslim].* He *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* also said: *"When the time for a prescribed prayer is due and a Muslim performs its Wudhoo' and its acts of bowing and prostration correctly, this prayer will be an expiation for his past sins, as long as he has not committed major sins, and this applies forever." [Muslim].***

- **The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"A house will be built in Paradise for every Muslim who offers twelve Rak`ah of optional prayer, other than the obligatory prayers, in a day and a night (to seek the Pleasure of Allaah)." [Muslim].***

- **The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"He who performs Ghusl on Friday, goes early to the mosque, walks and does not ride, sits close to the Imaam, listens attentively, and does not talk to others, will get for each step he takes from his house to the mosque the reward of a full year of fasting and night prayer."***

- **Prayer is a way to protect oneself. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"He who offers the dawn (Fajr) prayer will come under the Protection of Allaah. O son of Adam! Beware, lest Allaah should call you to account regarding transgressing against that which is under His Protection." [Muslim].***

- **Prayer is an opportunity for one to have his supplications responded to; it is also a means of attaining sustenance and blessings. Allaah says**

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لاَ نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقاً نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَٱلْعَـٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

Which means: ***"And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for .(those of] righteousness." (Taa Haa: 132]***

- **Prayer is a way of evaluating one's employees, as in the story of *Abu Al-Haytham*, may Allaah be pleased with him, when the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* recommended him to buy a certain slave and commanded him to be kind to him, because he noted that the slave was dedicated to his prayers.**

- **The prayer which prohibits one from immorality and wrongdoing is the one which is performed with submissiveness, and the one which has all its preconditions and conditions fulfilled. A man came to the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and said: *"So and so prays the night prayer but he steals during the day"* so he *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* responded by saying: *"Leave him, his prayer will prevent him from stealing."***

- **Prayer is the one act upon which one's success or failure in the Hereafter is decided. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"The first of man's deeds for which he will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection will be his prayer. If it is found to be perfect, he will be safe and successful; but if it is incomplete, he will be ill-fated and a loser." [At-Tirmithi].***

Allaah says

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ. ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِى صَلاَتِهِمْ خَـٰشِعُونَ

Which means: ***"Certainly will the believers have succeeded. They who are during their prayer humbly submissive" (AL-Mu'minoon: 1-2)*. Moreover, submissiveness, calmness, dignity and being watchful of Allaah all result from prayer. Turn your body towards the *Qiblah* and your heart towards Allaah, because if you direct your heart towards other than Allaah (i.e., if you are doing it only for show) then your prayer will not be fruitful.**

- **Prayer relaxes the heart. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* would tell *Bilaal* may Allaah be pleased with him, whenever something disturbed him: *"O Bilaal! Relax us with (the call for) the prayer."***

- **Prayer reflects ones fear of Allaah. When the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was sick, he said: *"Command Abu Bakr to lead the prayer.''* Whereupon *`Aa'ishah*, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: *"Abu Bakr is a very tender hearted person. He is bound to be overcome by weeping when he recites the Qur'aan.''* But the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* repeated: *"Command him (Abu Bakr) to lead the prayer." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim].* Similar to this, the weeping of *'Umar*, may Allaah be pleased with him, could be heard from the last row of prayer while *'Umar* was leading it, as narrated by *'Ubaydullaah ibn Shaddaad*, may Allaah be pleased with him. *'Ali ibn Abi Taalib*, may Allaah be pleased with him, would easily be moved to tears and was always thinking of the Hereafter; whenever the time for prayer came, the colour of his face would change and his body would shake; people would ask him why this was so and he would reply: *"The time for the trust (i.e., the prayer) has come, which the heavens, earth and mountains refused to shoulder and man shouldered."* Similarly, *Khalaf ibn Ayyoob*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was asked: *"Are you not bothered by the flies that land on your face during prayers?"* He replied: *"I heard that sinful people are patient whilst being punished for their sins in jail, so why would I move for a fly?" Ibn Sireen*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"I would look at the place of prostration of Muslim ibn Yasaar, may Allaah have mercy upon him, after he would raise his head from prostration, and it was as if someone had poured water there, and this was from the extent of his crying during the prayer."* The wife of *Masrooq*, may Allaah have mercy upon him and her, said: *"Masrooq's feet would be swollen every morning due to the length of time that he stood praying during the (previous) night." 'Ali ibn Al-Husayn*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was once prostrating when his house caught fire, so people began shouting: *'O grandson of the Prophet! Fire! Fire!'* but he would not stop praying, so after they put out the fire, they asked him: *'Why didn't you move when we shouted?'* to which he replied: *"I was too busy thinking about a greater fire (i.e., the Hellfire)."***

  Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan As-Sulami*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to be carried whilst sick to pray in the mosque, and when he was suffering from his death sickness he commanded his family to take him to the mosque and said: *"The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Everyone among you will be deemed to be occupied in prayer (i.e. he will be gaining the same reward as if he is standing, bowing and prostrating) for as long as the prayer detains him from worldly concerns'' and I want to die in that state." (Al-Bukhaari and Muslim). Haatim Al-Asamm*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was once asked about how he prayed and he replied: *"When the time for prayer comes, I perform ablution thoroughly and correctly then go to the mosque and sit in the place I intend to pray at until I am totally focused on my prayer, then I imagine that the Ka'bah is in front of me, the Siraat under my feet, Paradise to my right, Hell to my left and the angel of death behind my back, I also consider it to be the last prayer that I will ever perform; then, even after that I do not know whether or not Allaah would accept such a prayer from me."

Slaves of Allaah! During his death sickness, the last thing upon which the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* emphasised was the prayer, he *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Your prayers and what your hands possess"* meaning guard your prayers and command those whom you own (i.e., your servants) to pray. If this was his command *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* regarding one's slaves, then how much more so would the case be regarding one's wife and children?

Second Khutbah:

All perfect praise is due to Allaah; I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allaah and Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, upon whom may Allaah send salutations and exalt his mention, as well as that of his family and all his Companions.

Slaves of Allaah! The hypocrites from within our ranks are still launching vicious campaigns against Islaam and the Muslims via the media; they want to strip women from their faith and desire to terminate the notion of chastity; they are fighting the rulings of Allaah which He sent down as mercy for mankind; they are propagating free intermixing between men and women and are eager to make women abandon their *Hijaab* (Islamic attire); they attack devoted Muslims and label them as backward and uncivilised.

Dear Muslims! Meanwhile, the Jews and Christians shower our unarmed innocent brothers and sisters in Iraq and Palestine with bullets and compete with each other in the number of casualties they cause. What makes them shoot at them whilst most of them are unarmed civilians or schoolchildren? It is simply because they protest against the crusaders making obscene hand gestures from the top of buildings at our Iraqi sisters, and because they harass them as they walk on the streets; they walk among the Muslims in their underwear in order to humiliate them.

Slaves of Allaah! They claimed that they came to liberate people and give them freedom, but now we realise the meaning of the 'freedom' and 'liberty' that they have intended all along.

O Muslims! Meanwhile, the soldiers of Allaah attack the disbelievers in different parts of the world and mock their technology. A new epidemic which has spread, a minute virus (SARS) which has resulted in various severe sicknesses, which doctors worldwide find themselves helpless and puzzled in the face of. These diseases have greatly affected tourism in various countries and in some cases the income that specific countries make from tourism has decreased by seventy percent. Masks have become a part of people's daily life … cases of death have increased in many countries like Canada and Singapore … world leaders meet … passengers are checked before travelling … aircrafts are sterilised … entertainment places have been shut down … In China, in the world's third largest university, eight thousand students have been put under quarantine … insurance companies exclude this disease from their coverage. All of this is from a minute virus - one of the creations of Allaah, which causes the great losses which people are facing.

O Muslims! Are these not examples of the punishment of Allaah for nations which attack others. At the same time, they are trials and tests for the nations that are afflicted. People stand helpless in front of power and will of Allaah.

